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**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

TRANSPORTATION BUILDING, 425 WEST OTTAWA POST OFFICE BOX 30050, LANSING, MICHIGAN 48909

PHONE: (517) 373-2090 FAX: (517) 373-0167 WEB SITE: <http://www.mdot.state.mi.us>

**JAMES R. DeSANA, DIRECTOR**

April 21, 2000

The Honorable Philip E. Hoffman, Chair  
Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Transportation  
Michigan State Senate  
P.O. Box 30036  
Lansing, Michigan 48909

The Honorable Judith Scranton, Chair  
Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Transportation  
Michigan House of Representatives  
P.O. Box 30014  
Lansing, Michigan 48909

Dear Senator Hoffman and Representative Scranton:

In accordance with Section 718 of Public Act 136 of 1999, enclosed is a status report on the Lansing to Detroit Passenger Rail Study.

If you have any questions or comments regarding this report, feel free to contact me or Philip Kazmierski, Deputy Director, Bureau of Urban and Public Transportation, at (517) 373-2282.

Sincerely,

James R. DeSana  
Director

Enclosure

cc: Members of House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittee  
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P. Kazmierski  
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**Status Report**  
**on**  
**Lansing to Detroit Rail Passenger Study**  
April 1, 2000

On January 21, 1999, the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) entered into a contract with the Capital Area Transportation Authority (CATA) to provide funding for a study to determine the ability of a rail passenger operation to meet the travel demand between Lansing and Detroit. The contract provided \$100,000 of state funds, \$500,000 of federal funds, and a local match of \$25,000. CATA is providing the local match.

CATA is serving as lead agency and project director overseeing the consultant team on a daily basis. There are two committees associated with this project. The working committee is comprised of representatives from: CATA, MDOT, the Detroit Department of Transportation, Southeast Michigan Council of Governments, Tri-County Planning, the Federal Transit Administration, and the Federal Highway Administration. This committee provides an in-depth review of the consultant team's work and sets direction for the project. The project steering committee is comprised of elected officials and interested parties from the communities along the various rail corridors. They provide global direction and input to the steering committee and the consultant team. The consultant team is lead by Parsons Transportation Group in association with Transportation Economics & Management System, Inc., JL Roach Inc., Rossman Martin & Associates, and Oppenheimer Wolff Donnelly & Bayh LLP.

The project has been divided into four phases, the first two of which are completed:

- ☐ The first phase reviewed four existing studies of rail passenger service in Michigan and similar existing services in North America. These four studies were not focused on travel from Lansing to Detroit and existing services in North America were similar to what is being proposed from Lansing to Detroit. The purpose of reviewing these existing services was to identify key successes and pitfalls. The phase one report was issued in May 1999 and is available from CATA or can be accessed via their website at [CATA.org](http://CATA.org).
- ☐ The second phase focused on reviewing four existing rail corridors from Lansing to Detroit to determine the feasibility of passenger rail to meet travel needs. The outcome was a recommended corridor warranting more detailed analysis. The following map shows the corridors. The phase two report was completed in November 1999 and is also available from CATA or can be accessed via their website at [CATA.org](http://CATA.org). The following rail corridor was selected for further study: the CSX Transportation Railroad between Lansing and Howell, the Tuscola and Saginaw Bay Railroad and Ann Arbor Railroad between Howell and Ann Arbor, and the Norfolk Southern Railroad between Ann Arbor and Detroit.

- ❑ The third phase is a detailed study of the above mentioned rail corridor. The consultant team is presently working on ridership and revenue projections and operating cost estimates. They are also refining capital improvement cost estimates, and meeting with local community leaders along the corridor to educate them on the issues associated with this project. Based on this detailed study, at the end of phase three, the consultant team will make a recommendation to the rail working committee. The rail working committee will decide if the project should continue on its present course, be redirected, or terminated. This phase is estimated to be completed in June, 2000.
- ❑ The fourth phase is to develop a business plan for the service. This phase will only be completed if it is found that passenger rail service is a viable option.



**Lansing to Detroit Rail Corridors**

The study was originally scheduled to be completed by December 1999, and was extended until August 2000. The schedule was extended to accommodate consultant related delays and allow extra time relating to terminal and station location issues. This extension also allows the communities along the selected corridor the opportunity to gain a better understanding of the issues associated with rail passenger services.